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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: LITHUANIA 2005 ANNUAL TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP)
REPORT

REF: STATE 273089

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

1. (SBU) Summary: Lithuania is a country of origin, transit, and destination for international trafficking in women. Although the exact extent and magnitude of trafficking in persons (TIP) in Lithuania is unknown, Europol estimates that over 1,200 Lithuanian women are victims of human trafficking every year. The government of Lithuania (GOL) estimates that between 1,000-1,500 women leave Lithuania every year to engage in prostitution. Traffickers target young women from rural and economically disadvantaged areas with promises of employment abroad. Lithuania acknowledges that TIP is a problem and has implemented its first multi-faceted strategy for 2002-2004 to combat TIP. An interagency group drafted a national strategy for 2005-2008. Official approval of the strategy is expected in March 2005.

2. (SBU) During the reporting period, the GOL increased TIP-related funding to NGOs, conducted a study designed to improve assistance to victims, and strengthened its witnesses protection program. The GOL's anti-TIP strategy, however, was not effective in all regions of country, and relied heavily on NGOs to organize and administer TIP-related programs. Convictions and sentences remained low in 2004; sixteen criminal cases of human trafficking reached Lithuanian courts, resulting in fourteen convictions. End Summary.

1I. Overview

3. (SBU) Lithuania is a country of origin, transit and destination for internationally trafficked women. Although the exact extent and magnitude of trafficking in persons (TIP) in Lithuania is unknown, Europol estimates that over 1,200 Lithuanian women are victims of human trafficking every year. The government of Lithuania (GOL) estimates that about 1,000-1,500 women leave Lithuania every year to engage in prostitution; many of them are victims of TIP. Based on the increasing number of requests for assistance by TIP victims, NGOs believe that this number is likely higher. Trafficking patterns involving Lithuanian women indicate that the destination of these women is usually large cities in Germany, Spain, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, England, France, and Poland. According to the Ministry of Interior, 52 victims of trafficking have been officially registered since 2000.

4. (SBU) Lithuania serves as a destination and transit point for victims of trafficking. Women from Belarus, Russia (Kaliningrad region), and Ukraine comprise approximately 12 percent of Lithuania's prostitutes. These women work as street prostitutes, call girls, or in illegal brothels. Other women continue on to third countries.

5. (SBU) Poor or economically disadvantaged women tend to be the primary targets of traffickers. These women usually come from rural areas with few economic opportunities. Traffickers also target socially vulnerable groups - young women from poor or unstable families, and girls from boarding schools and orphanages.

6. (SBU) Traffickers use newspapers and magazines to lure clients and prostitutes. Newspaper advertisements invite women to provide intimate services, such as massage, home flower delivery, and escort services. Traffickers advertise jobs abroad in restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and hotels or invite girls to work as nannies, nurses, or models, while others offer marriage. Through seemingly legitimate advertisements, traffickers gain the women's trust. Traffickers tend to ensure compliance through threats and by withholding their documents, rather than resorting to physical violence.

7. (SBU) Organized groups, some belonging to international trafficking rings, and individuals engage in trafficking in

persons in Lithuania. Traffickers who recruit from boarding schools are often well-dressed women, who approach the teenage boarders with offers of lucrative jobs. The traffickers search for girls who want to work abroad as prostitutes and rarely risk taking girls abroad by force. Another trafficking trend is for friends or close relatives to sell woman or girls to traffickers. Trafficked women are often provided with false personal documents.

New Studies and Surveys

18. (SBU) In 2004, the GOL funded a study "The Supply and Demand for Rehabilitation Services for Victims of Trafficking and Forced Prostitution: The Effectiveness and Cost of Services." The study concluded that the international nature of the trafficking business, differing definitions of "victim," and underreporting obfuscate the veracity of national statistics on the issue. The study also notes that assistance to victims is fragmented in Lithuania, because inter-agency coordination is poor. The study recommended the development of a more effective victim rehabilitation and reintegration system.

The GOL seriously addresses TIP

19. (SBU) Political will to combat TIP exists at the highest levels of the GOL. Lithuania's first national strategy to combat TIP ended in 2004. The GOL allocated 1,300,000 Litass (\$480,000) for TIP-related activities during the 2002-2004 program. In 2004, the GOL allocated over 800,000 Litass (\$300,000) for NGOs, prevention and witness protection programs, and created an inter-agency group to develop an anti-TIP strategy for 2005-2008. The GOL will likely approve this strategy in March. The GOL plans to allocate 1,000,000 Litass (\$375,000) for anti-TIP programs in 2005.

110. (SBU) The Ministry of Interior systematically monitors the implementation of the national TIP control and prevention program. In coordination with other institutions, the Ministry provides implementation status reports to the GOL twice a year. The main sources of information on TIP are the Criminal Police, the Ministry of Interior, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), foreign agencies, and the media. These sources of information have proven reliable. Because the GOL and NGOs periodically publicize anti-TIP efforts, media attention regarding TIP has increased.

111. (SBU) There were no reports of authority or law enforcement involvement in TIP-related crimes in 2004. Six criminal cases in Lithuania in 2004 involved teenage girls as victims of trafficking; there were no trafficking cases involving men.

112. (SBU) Local NGOs identify three impediments to the GOL's efforts to address TIP problems on the ground: public and law enforcement apathy regarding the welfare of victims of trafficking who are often considered prostitutes; allegedly corrupt law enforcement officials; and a lack of resources. According to NGOs, GOL funding for TIP-related investigations, prosecutions, witness protection programs, prevention initiatives, and assistance to victims has increased but remains inadequate.

113. (SBU) The GOL admits that bringing TIP-related cases before a court of law is a continuing challenge. Law enforcement officials and investigators lack experience in investigating TIP cases, and many lack adequate professional contacts with foreign law enforcement officials and public prosecutors to help build a case against international traffickers. The GOL contends that gathering sufficient evidence and meeting the standard of proof regarding the sale of a victim is difficult. The prosecution of cases in which the criminal act occurs outside Lithuania is particularly complicated.

114. (SBU) GOL officials also note that it is difficult to persuade victims to testify in TIP cases. Victims rarely witness the actual trafficking transaction, and therefore cannot provide testimony against their traffickers. Suspects usually deny that they were guilty of trafficking in persons, often maintaining instead that they had brought the victims abroad for legal employment or as traveling companions. In some cases, victims apparently involve law enforcement agents in an effort to frighten or coerce persons who have transported them to pay or increase wages.

Prostitution

15. (SBU) Prostitution is illegal in Lithuania. Prostitution is an administrative offense punishable by a fine of up to 500 Litas (\$185) for a single offense and up to 1,000 Litas (\$370) for repeated offenses. The Penal Code covers crimes related to prostitution (para 26). According to the law enforcement officials, 3,000 to 5,000 women engaged in prostitution in Lithuania in 2004. Some 18 "escort" companies operated in the capital alone. In 2004, 662 women (compared with 681 in 2003, 214 in 2002, and 272 in 2001) received fines for engaging in prostitution. Thirty-five, or five percent, were juveniles. Though pimping was criminalized, the number of pandering cases before Lithuanian courts in 2004 remained low. Police report that women from Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine constitute some 12 percent of all women engaged in prostitution in Lithuania (40 percent in 2001).

16. (SBU) Men neither buy nor sell child brides in Lithuania; nor do they travel abroad to purchase child brides.

II. Prevention

GOL Organization and Efforts to Prevent TIP

17. (SBU) The GOL acknowledges that trafficking in persons is a problem in Lithuania. The Ministries of Education, Justice, Interior, Social Security and Labor and Health Care, the Center for Crime Prevention, and the Police are directly involved in anti-trafficking efforts and the implementation of the national anti-TIP strategy. They exchange relevant information with the Border Protection Service, Customs, the Prosecutor General's Office, the Special Investigation Service, the State Security Department, and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense. The Government's anti-trafficking program also involves the Ministry of Finance, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, and the Association of Local Governments. The Ministry of Interior works with the Ministry of Justice to improve legislation. Since 2000, the Border Protection Service has paid more attention to young persons, particularly females, traveling abroad.

18. (SBU) Though the GOL increased funding to NGOs combating TIP, the majority of anti-TIP funding still comes from foreign donors. In 2004, the GOL, in cooperation with NGOs, organized a series of international and local events to discuss TIP prevention. Conclusions from the international conference, "Problems of Reintegration for Victims of Trafficking" outlined weaknesses in the Lithuanian system that needed to be addressed by both governmental and nongovernmental organizations. The Conference called for the establishment of an effective rehabilitation system; increased vigilance by law enforcement officials and social workers in identifying victims; the establishment of a specialized anti-trafficking police unit; and permanent anti-TIP educational programs for youth. The Conference findings were distributed to the Offices of the President, Prime Minister, and Speaker of Parliament. In response, the President's Office called a governmental meeting in January 2005 to evaluate the effectiveness of the national anti-TIP program, and called upon the GOL to codify and adequately fund Lithuania's national anti-TIP strategy for 2005-2008.

19. (SBU) TIP prevention is not part of the national curricula. A TIP prevention program, created in 2003, is instituted on a voluntary basis in schools and in areas recognized by municipalities as having a history of trafficking. The GOL and local NGOs organized a series of educational events for more than 200 boarding school students throughout Lithuania in 2004.

20. (SBU) Local leaders cooperated with the NGO "Lithuanian and USA Initiatives" (LUSI) to establish TIP information centers in 2004 in eight counties in Lithuania. These centers provide TIP-related information to law enforcement, educators, social workers, victims, and the general public.

21. (SBU) The GOL approved the National Anti-Corruption Program in 2002, and the GOL's Special Investigation Service coordinates its implementation. A mid-level official at the Ministry of Interior is the national coordinator for the development and implementation of the anti-TIP program.

22. (SBU) The GOL is a member of the International Office of Migration (IOM). In 2004, the IOM published a book for specialists, educators, and the general public that provided information about Lithuania's TIP situation. In cooperation with the GOL, the IOM has also published manuals for educators, social workers, and law enforcement

officials on combating TIP. 3,000 Lithuanians received counseling from the IOM on how to legally obtain work abroad. In 2005, the IOM and GOL initiated a new educational campaign to inform educators, parents, and students about trafficking.

GOL's Relationship with NGOs

123. (SBU) The GOL supports prevention programs by cooperating with foreign institutions, and by providing funding to local NGOs. In 2004, the GOL allocated 270,000 Litas (\$100,000) to 13 local organizations implementing TIP prevention and victims assistance programs (197,000 Litas in 2003 and 90,000 in 2002).

124. (SBU) NGOs and the GOL closely cooperated to implement all major anti-TIP projects in 2004. NGOs acknowledge increasing GOL efforts to fight TIP, but indicate that current funding is inadequate. NGOs also note that law enforcement institutions are not interested in the investigation of TIP cases, and criticize police apathy in assisting victims whom are often consider prostitutes. NGOs complain that governmental assistance to TIP victims is fragmented and does not ensure effective and continuous support.

International Cooperation on TIP Prevention

125. (SBU) The Criminal Police Bureau of the Lithuanian Police coordinates TIP issues. In 2004, law enforcement sent a representative to the Interpol Committee responsible for combating TIP. Police officials continued to participate in Interpol's "Red Routes" program. In March 2004, Lithuania hosted an international conference for participants from 22 countries to evaluate the results of the program. Police strengthened its cooperation with law enforcement institutions from Germany, England, Latvia, Belarus, and Estonia by organizing a series of high-level meetings to discuss TIP-related collaboration. Lithuania and Germany signed a Protocol of Intention to cooperate in preventing crime.

III. Investigation and Prosecution of Traffickers

The Law against TIP

126. (SBU) Lithuania's Criminal Code has included an article on TIP since 1998. Since 2003, the Criminal Code includes eight articles related to TIP activities. The Code prescribes penalties and defines a trafficker as: "an individual, who having a purpose to get material or other personal profit, having sold, or purchased or passed over or acquired in some other way a person, shall be punished by deprivation of freedom for eight years." The new Code allows authorities to prosecute individuals for establishing and operating a brothel, for public demonstration or promotion of pornographic items, and for possessing child pornography. There is no specific law against slavery, but other laws effectively cover this issue. Since 2001, the Criminal Process Code and the Criminal Code provides protection for victims of trafficking willing to testify in trafficking cases.

127. (SBU) The new Criminal Code prescribes the following penalties and fines for TIP-related activities:

trafficking in persons -- up to eight years imprisonment;

profiting monetarily from prostitution or pimping -- up to 25,000 Litas (\$9,200) and up to four years in prison;

profiting monetarily from prostitution or pimping of a minor or engaging, organizing, and/or heading prostitution activities involving a minor -- two to eight years in prison. (Note: Minors in Lithuania fall under different legal categories. The law assigns different legal rights to minors who are younger than 14 years old than to those who are between 14-18 years old. End Note).

organizing or heading prostitution rings or transporting a person for the purpose of prostitution -- up to six years in prison;

engaging in prostitution -- up to 12,500 Litas (\$4,600) and incarceration for up to three years;

forcing individuals into prostitution by means of coercion or fraud and engaging a minor in prostitution -- from two to seven years in prison;

trafficking in children -- two to ten years imprisonment.

128. (SBU) The GOL applies punitive sentences to rapists similar to those given to traffickers. The penalty for rape is up to seven years imprisonment. Sentences for raping a juvenile (over 14 years old) can be from three to ten years, and rape of a minor (under 14 years of age) from five to 15 years. The penalty for forcible sexual assault carries a maximum jail sentence of six years; in the case of a juvenile - from two to ten years; and in the case of a minor - from three to 13 years. The law allows for the GOL to confiscate the property of convicted individuals. The punishment for the exploitation of children for pornography is a fine and a maximum jail sentence of four years imprisonment.

129. (SBU) Lithuanian law allows for the extradition to Lithuania of foreign nationals charged with trafficking in other countries. The same extradition regulations apply to persons charged in trafficking cases as in other criminal cases. Bilateral legal assistance agreements govern GOL requests for extradition. Lithuania has legal assistance agreements with Belarus, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, Uzbekistan, and a trilateral legal assistance agreement among the three Baltic States, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The GOL joined the 1957 European Convention on Extradition in 1995. The Criminal Code and the Criminal Process Code, however, state that the GOL can extradite a citizen of Lithuania or a foreigner, suspected or charged with committing a crime, to a foreign country only if the bilateral agreement with that country specifically mandates that obligation. So far, only the agreement on extradition signed with the United States in 2001 meets this criterion.

130. There were no TIP-related extraditions in Lithuania in 2004. In January 2005, a Vilnius court sanctioned the arrest of a Costa Rican citizen suspected by Costa Rican authorities of trafficking children in that country. The suspect will likely be extradited to Costa Rica.

131. (SBU) The GOL has signed and ratified all major international instruments:

-- ILO Convention 182 by passing the Law No. IX-1396, March 25, 2003.

-- ILO Convention 29 and 105 on Forced or Compulsory Labor, June 1994.

-- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, April 2003.

-- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, June 10, 2004.

Investigating and Prosecuting TIP Cases

132. (SBU) The GOL actively investigates cases of trafficking, and its agencies use special investigative techniques, to the extent possible under domestic law, such as electronic surveillance, undercover operations, mitigated punishment and immunity for cooperating suspects. In 2002, undercover operations initiated over 80 percent of all investigation cases. In 2003, the Organized Crime Investigation Service of the Lithuanian Criminal Police, for the first time, arrested leaders of a foreign-based trafficking ring. In February 2004, as part of a long-term investigation, the Criminal Police and State Border Protection Service broke up a ring of Lithuanians in Vilnius allegedly trafficking women to brothels abroad.

133. (SBU) Authorities initiated 22 new criminal investigations between March 2004-January 2005. The cases involved 25 traffickers and 31 victims, all of whom were women, including six juveniles. Sixteen criminal cases involving trafficking reached court in 2004. 14 individuals were convicted. Sentences ranged from fines to three years' imprisonment.

134. (SBU) Police report that nearly half of traffickers have links to organized crime, including international groups. Individuals, small groups, friends or family members constitute the balance. In 2004, a former Austrian Olympic figure skating champion was arrested for trafficking 15 Lithuanian women to Italy and Austria as prostitutes.

135. (SBU) There were no official reports about the involvement of employment agencies or marriage brokers in TIP-related activities in Lithuania, but media reports

suggest that some travel agencies may be involved. There are no reliable figures on the value of the prostitution business in the country. According to unofficial law enforcement statistics, the prostitution business in Vilnius is between \$1.5-\$5 million per year.

136. (SBU) There is no evidence of GOL involvement or tolerance of trafficking.

GOL Anti-TIP Training

137. (SBU) The majority of specialized anti-TIP training that GOL officials receive occurs in foreign countries or through international organizations. The IOM, in cooperation with the GOL, trained over 200 law enforcement specialists in 2003-2004 on how to recognize, investigate, and prosecute instances of trafficking. In 2004, Lithuanian law enforcement officials participated in TIP-related training in Norway, Belarus, Netherlands, Ukraine, and Sweden.

138. (SBU) The GOL has signed bilateral agreements of cooperation with the Interior Ministries of more than 20 countries, including in the area of trafficking. Lithuania law enforcement cooperates with Interpol and German/Scandinavian liaison officers.

139. (SBU) Law enforcement officials participated in over 20 international investigations in 2004. The GOL provided assistance to victims and protected witnesses in these investigations.

IV. Protection and Assistance to Victims

GOL Assistance Available

140. (SBU) Several government agencies and organizations provide social, psychological, and legal assistance to TIP victims. The City of Vilnius and other municipalities own hostels where mothers and children who are victims of domestic violence and trafficking receive shelter and social support. The Vilnius municipality's hostel provided shelter and comprehensive care for 17 trafficking victims in 2004. The AIDS Center of Vilnius provides medical assistance and testing for HIV/AIDS. The Foreigners Registration Center of the State Border Guard Service addresses questions of reintegration into Lithuanian society. The Police Department assists victims on legal and victim protection issues and cooperates with NGOs working in this area. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs assisted 42 individuals who suffered from human trafficking abroad.

141. (SBU) About 20 NGOs provide consultations or temporary shelter and rehabilitation assistance for victims of violence and TIP. The GOL provided grants to 13 organizations in 2004. Some of these organizations have also received financial support from local governments. According to some NGOs, GOL funding is still insufficient, a situation that forces the NGOs to look for financial assistance from international donors.

142. (SBU) There is no official information on the exact number of TIP victims assisted in Lithuania. Experts estimate that over 300 victims received support and over 120 women were placed in all-care facilities in 2004. 30 women from six municipalities received individual psychological assistance and occupational training under the GOL's program "Psychological Rehabilitation, Professional Orientation, and Employment of Victims of Trafficking and Prostitution," implemented in 2003-2004.

143. (SBU) There is no official screening and referral process in place to transfer victims to NGOs that provide short- or long-term care. The police, however, closely cooperate with organizations that provide care to TIP victims, and, when appropriate, transfer victims to them. In 2004, Police signed an official agreement of cooperation with the NGO "Missing Persons' Families Support Center" to assist TIP victims.

Trafficked Victims' Rights and Protection

144. (SBU) The GOL respects the rights of victims of trafficking. Although currently enacted laws could charge victims of trafficking for prostitution or immigration violations, police have not pursued or charged trafficking victims. In February 2005, the GOL approved and submitted to the parliament revised amendments to existing criminal

laws, which would not penalize victims of trafficking for acts related to prostitution or illegal immigration into Lithuania, provided GOL officials can determine that the individuals committed these unlawful acts as a direct result of being trafficked. These laws would not apply to trafficked persons transiting Lithuania en route to a third country. The proposed amendments allow victims of trafficking to acquire special residence status, enabling them a right to stay in Lithuania for a definite period of time during which they might decide whether they are willing to testify in a trafficking case. The GOL has also approved new legislation to penalize persons buying sexual services.

145. (SBU) GOL agencies and NGOs encourage victims to assist in trafficking investigations and prosecutions. Victims may also file civil suits or seek legal action against traffickers. Victims, however, often fear seeking help from local authorities (both in Lithuania and abroad), believing they will face deportation or arrest if they come forward. If a victim is a material witness in a court case against a former employer, the victim may obtain other employment or leave the country. There is no victim restitution program, but victims may apply to the court for moral compensation.

146. (SBU) The Police Department's "Witnesses and Victims Protection Service" provides protection to victims and witnesses. The GOL allocated about 500,000 Litass (\$180,000) to improve the Vilnius witness protection center. The center provides protection and safe houses to victim witnesses. Due to limited resources and the program's high cost, the police have discretion whether the case warrants utilizing the protection service. TIP victims and witnesses composed 13-14% of all protected people in 2004.

Training GOL Officials to Assist TIP Victims

147. (SBU) The GOL does provide some specialized training on victim assistance to its officials. The law enforcement training center provides four hours of training in combating trafficking and preventing migration twice a year to new officers. Most of the funds for this training, however, come from foreign donors (para 37). The Director of Vilnius Airport's border guard detachment participated in a USG-funded International Visitors Program.

148. (SBU) The GOL routinely provides its embassies and consulates in countries that are destination or transit countries with instructions on handling trafficking cases and on assisting Lithuanian citizens who are victims of trafficking. These embassies and consulates maintain relationships with local governments and with Lithuanian and host-country NGOs that serve trafficked victims. The GOL has established a special support fund for overseas missions to assist victims of trafficking.

149. (SBU) Repatriated nationals who are victims of trafficking receive the same assistance from GOL and NGOs as domestic TIP victims.

NGOs Assisting TIP Victims

150. (SBU) There are no NGOs that work exclusively in the TIP area. The following NGOs provide the most services to trafficking victims:

--- The "Missing Persons Families Support Center" devotes 60 percent of its time to sheltering and assisting trafficking victims. It provided shelter and social assistance to 17 victims of trafficking in 2004. The Center distributed over 82,000 anti-TIP brochures and posters to young people throughout Lithuania, and implemented over 10 TIP prevention programs in 2004. The Center has operated a toll-free hot line for victims since 2001. The GOL has provided funding to the Center since 2001, though this sum constitutes only about half of the Center's annual budget. Foreign organizations provide the balance of funding.

--- "Caritas" is a Catholic charity that receives most of its funding from German Catholic organizations. In 2004, Caritas assisted over 90 prostitutes and victims of TIP.

--- The "Women's House Crisis Centers" operates in 16 regions in Lithuania. The Center provides counseling to at-risk girls, and to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and TIP. The Center established a toll-free telephone number for victims in four regions. Over one hundred women, including at-risk juveniles, received assistance in 2004.

--- The Social Ailments Consultation Site "DEMETRA," which obtains most of its funding from the government's AIDS Center, provides anonymous, free medical assistance and psychological consultations to prostitutes and drug addicts in Vilnius. In 2004, Demetra assisted 142 women engaged in prostitution, including 18 TIP victims. Demetra's programs also promote safe sex, testing for sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, and the development, publication and dissemination of informational and educational material.

151. (SBU) Many of these organizations cooperate with each other and work with the GOL and the local IOM bureau.

TIP Hero

152. (SBU) Post nominates Mrs. Ona Gustiene for inclusion in a "TIP Hero" section of the 2005 TIP report. Mrs. Gustiene is the Director and founder of the Missing Persons' Families Support Center, the first NGO in Lithuania established to provide shelter and rehabilitation assistance to TIP victims. Under Mrs. Gustiene's leadership, the Center has implemented over 30 anti-TIP programs since its founding in 1996. Mrs. Gustiene has worked tirelessly to fight trafficking in persons in Lithuania, giving countless hours of her time to draw attention and resources to the issue. Mrs. Gustiene has continuously lobbied the government to take more forceful actions to combat trafficking. Her efforts significantly contributed to the development and implementation of the National anti-TIP Strategy, and increased assistance to repatriated victims. She has collaborated with other Lithuanian NGOs, and enlisted the assistance of volunteers to widen the services provided to TIP victims. She continues to spread the anti-TIP message in Lithuania and the region through an effective and growing outreach program. Mrs. Gustiene is an exceptionally strong leader, organizing and coordinating anti-TIP efforts through her extensive involvement with national media. She has brought dozens of foreign experts to Lithuania to discuss ways to assist victims of human trafficking. She has also established excellent relations with the diplomatic community and, on a daily basis, demonstrates how diplomatic families can help change the communities in which they live.

Best practices

153. (SBU) Efforts to improve law enforcement cooperation, raise awareness, and provide assistance to victims do not effectively reach all areas in Lithuania. One project that targets the development of effective, regional anti-TIP programming is conducted by the NGO "Lithuanian U.S. Initiatives" (LUSI). In 2003-2004, LUSI implemented the program "Monitoring and Development of Preventive Networks." Under this program, LUSI established eight anti-TIP information centers around Lithuania to coordinate and implement TIP prevention activities. LUSI provided a series of trainings to local authorities and NGOs on the methodologies of working with youth, forming partnerships, and developing local anti-TIP strategies. LUSI's centers provide information and assistance to those in need. For example, the centers educate and provide anti-TIP training material to educators, law enforcement officials, parents and students. The centers collaborate with local partners, forming inter-agency anti-trafficking working groups at the local level. The centers have a significant impact on educating people about TIP; post-program evaluation surveys show that knowledge on how to recognize threats and assist victims increased 33%.

1V. Comment: Assessment

154. (SBU) The Government of Lithuania fully complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Through the reporting period, the GOL continued to demonstrate the political will to address the TIP problem. It improved its partnerships with NGOs and increased funding for anti-TIP initiatives. To further strengthen anti-trafficking efforts, the GOL should expand the anti-TIP strategy nationwide, establish a formal victim screening program and referral mechanism, and ensure that TIP investigations are conducted more effectively. It should also improve legal instruments in order to ensure that convicted traffickers receive more serious sentences.

VI. Post Contact Information

155. (SBU) Embassy points of contact for TIP are Trevor

Boyd, Political Officer (through March 1, 2005), and Vice-Consul (after March 1, 2005), and Giedra Gureviciute, Political/Economic Specialist. Tel (370-5)266-5500, fax: (370-5)266-5500. Email:gureviciute@state.gov, BoydTW@state.gov.

156. (SBU) Post spent 150 hours in the preparation of this TIP report cable. POL and CONS FSOs spent 30 hours on information gathering and editing. POL/ECON FSN spent 120 hours on information gathering and drafting.
MULL